



Forest Health Protection Pacific Southwest Region



Date: August 30, 2010

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To: Patricia Grantham, Forest Supervisor, Klamath National Forest

Subject: Biological Evaluation of Seiad Elementary School Penny Pines Plantation and Walker Creek Plantations – Oak Knoll Ranger District (FHP Report No. N10-005)

On June 1 – 4, 2010, Cynthia Snyder (Entomologist) and Pete Angwin (Plant Pathologist) from Forest Health Protection visited the Klamath National Forest to review past, current and future thinning projects requesting FHP funding with Roger Siemers (Klamath National Forest SO).

On June 1, Cynthia, Pete and Roger were joined by Carol Sharp, Todd Drake and Pete Holodnick (Happy Camp Ranger District) and to look at the Seiad Valley Penny Pines Plantations and Walker Creek Plantations planned for possible thinning in FY2012.

Observations and recommendations for the planned projects areas are as follows:

Seiad Valley Penny Pines Plantations

The Seiad Elementary School Penny Pines Plantation (N41°46.752', W123°10.398') was planted to ponderosa pine in the 1960s with incense cedar and white fir seeding in naturally. The pines are currently 12-16 inches DBH with understory trees ranging from 6 to 8 inches (Figures 1 and 2). Current basal area is 110-120 square feet per acre. The desired prescription would be to thin to 60-80 sq.ft./ac. (30-35 foot spacing) with a clumpy distribution to enhance wildlife habitat. This is not ideal for pine plantations, but would still be sufficient to reduce bark beetle risk for the stand as a whole. NEPA is not currently done on this plantation, but similar stands in the area are covered under the Thom-Seider NEPA planned for completion in 2010. NEPA will need to be completed for the stand we looked at. This would be a commercial machine-harvest, thus FHP funds would only be appropriate for helping with non-commercial portions or follow-up treatments as a separate bid item.

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Figure 1. Seiad Elementary School Penny Pines plantation is overly dense, larger diameter ponderosa pine with dense ingrowth of white fir.

Walker Creek Plantations

The Walker Creek Road Plantations (N41°45.207', W123°07.208') cover 40 acres along the Walker Creek Road (45N65) up toward the Lake Mountain Lookout (Figure 3). Plantations were planted to ponderosa pine in the 1960s and 1970s. Currently distribution is clumpy with pines in the 4-8 inch DBH category (Figure 4). NEPA is not currently done. Breakage potential due to snow-loading and wind after thinning is high and there is a long haul distance which would affect the ability of the District to sell the material. This would be a low priority for FHP funding.



Figure 2. Walker plantation unit.

Summary

The proposed treatments in the Penny Pines, if fully implemented, will be effective in addressing concerns regarding bark beetles, fire and drought, and will meet the Regional Forester's density management policy that high risk density levels will not be reached again for at least 20 years. I fully support the treatments as described. The Walker Plantations are not currently a high priority for FHP.

If you have any questions regarding this report and/or need additional information please contact Cynthia Snyder at 530-226-2437 or Pete Angwin at 530-226-2436.

/s/ Cynthia Snyder

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CC: Roger Siemers, Dan Blessing, Dave Burgess, Pete Angwin, Sheri Smith, Julie Lydick and Phil Cannon